

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 IO-10 ISO-00 NEAE-00 OMB-01

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 851

INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

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AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KABUL

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AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMCONSUL MADRAS

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 NEW DELHI 11513

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, IN

SUBJ: EMERGENCY: SECOND MONTH ANALYSIS

REF: NEW DELHI 11367

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SUMMARY: GOOD RAINS AND A WIDESPREAD POPULAR SATISFACTION  
WITH THE DISCIPLINE, ORDER AND SENSE OF DIRECTION ENGEN-  
DERED BY THE EMERGENCY HAVE STRENGTHENED MRS GANDHI'S HAND  
SHE CONTINUES HER FIRM POSTURE TOWARD THE OPPOSITION

AND PRESS AND WILL PROBABLY USE HER NEAR TOTAL CONTROL OVER THE LEGISLATURE TO FURTHER CURTAIL THE JUDICIARY'S POWERS. THE PRIME MINISTER IS SLOWLY EXTENDING THE EMERGENCY'S POWER INCLUDING CENSORSHIP, AGAINST OVER RELUCTANT STATE OPPOSITION GOVERNMENTS IN TAMIL NADU AND GUJARAT. HER SUPPRESSION OF POLITICAL AND PRESS FREEDOMS HAS CREATED NEW PROBLEMS. THIS COULD FORCE DISSENT AND OPPOSITION INTO ILLEGAL CHANNELS AND STIMULATE SOME CLANDESTINE RESISTANCE IN THE LONG RUN. SHE MAY ALSO BECOME INCREASINGLY ISOLATED FROM ADVICE AND IDEAS. THE ENORMITY OF INDIA'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND MRS GANDHI'S DETERMINATION TO PRESERVE HER POLITICAL SUPREMACY MAKE IT UNLIKELY THAT SHE WILL ATTEMPT TO RESTRUCTURE INDIAN SOCIETY. SHE HAS DECIDED TO EMPHASIZE PRODUCTION RATHER THAN DISTRIBUTION, AND TO DOWNPLAY TIES WITH THE LEFT. SHE HAS SIGNALLED READINESS TO BETTER TIES WITH THE US. HER APPARENT REJECTION OF AMBITIOUS CHANGE, AND RETENTION OF FAMILIAR BUREAUCRATIC AND POLITICAL MACHINERY INDICATES THAT INDIA'S FUNDAMENTAL AND LONG TERM ECONOMIC PROBLEMS WILL REMAIN LARGELY UNAFFECTED DESPITE HER CONSOLIDATION OF POWER. END SUMMARY.

1. REFTEL CARRIES OUR ASSESSMENT THAT THIS YEAR'S EXCELLENT MONSOON HAS STRENGTHENED SHORT TERM ECONOMIC PROSPECTS, AND CONSEQUENTLY MRS GANDHI'S POLITICAL POSITION. ALTHOUGH BANGLADESH WAS AN UNSETTLING EVENT, THE PRIME MINISTER CAN REST CONTENT THAT THE GREAT MAJORITY OF INDIANS WHO COUNT ARE SATISFIED WITH THE FRESH SENSE OF DIRECTION, THE DISCIPLINE, THE GENERALLY POSITIVE EFFECT ON PRICES AND THE INCREASED ORDER THE EMERGENCY HAS INTRODUCED. IN PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS IN THIS POLITICIZED CAPITAL, LITTLE OR NO REFERENCE IS MADE TO THE THEMES THAT WERE SO HEATEDLY DEBATED ON THE EVE OF THE EMERGENCY: ALLAHABAD AND GUJARAT; RESIGNATION; OPPOSITION UNITY. THERE IS INSTEAD A CONFIDENTIAL

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PASSIVE ACCEPTANCE IF NOT ENDORSEMENT OF MRS GANDHI'S CONSTANT INSISTENCE THAT THE "WESTMINISTER" EXPERIMENT IS NOT FULLY SUITED TO INDIA'S BACKGROUNDS AND PROBLEMS, AND NOW REQUIRES SOME REVISION.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE IMPROVEMENTS: BY ALL ACCOUNTS, THE EMERGENCY HAS AT LEAST TEMPORARILY PUT SOME FIRE UNDER THE NOTORIOUSLY LETHARGIC INDIAN BUREAUCRACY. THERE HAS BEEN A WAVE OF DISMISSALS AND EARLY RETIREMENTS OF OFFICIALS FOR CORRUPTION, INEPTITUDE AND DERELICTION OF DUTY. (WE COUNT OVER 5,000 COUNTRY WIDE ON THE BASIS OF DELHI NEWSPAPER REPORTS.) GOVERNMENT SERVANTS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MEMORY ARE SHOWING UP AT WORK- AND ON TIME. IAS OFFICERS AT THE RURAL DISTRICT LEVEL

EXPRESS SATISFACTION AT THE PARTIAL RETURN OF THE BUREAUCRATIC RAJ AND THEIR NEW FLEXIBILITY. ALTHOUGH ACKNOWLEDGING THAT THE 20 POINT PROGRAM AND GOI SOCIO-ECONOMIC RHETORIC IS NEW WINE IN OLD BOTTLES, THEY INSIST THAT A NEW POLITICAL WILL TO SEE THINGS THROUGH AT THE TOP AND A DIMINUTION OF INTERFERENCE FROM CONGRESS POLITICIANS AT THEIR LEVEL HAVE IMPROVED PROSPECTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION. THEY CLAIM THAT FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YEARS STUDENTS ARE STUDYING AND TEACHERS ARE TEACHING; INFLATION IS CHECKED; TRANQUILITY PREVAIL ES; AND THE STREETS ARE CLEAN; AND SHOPKEEPERS ARE POSTING PRICES. THE NEW ENTHUSIASM AMONG IAS BUREAUCRATS IN RURAL AREAS CONTRASTS WITH THE MORE CAUTIOUS OUTLOOK OF THEIR COUNTERPARTS IN THE CITIES WHERE THE ATMOSPHERE OF UNCERTAINTY AND TENSION IS MORE PREVALENT.

3. THE PRIME MINISTER CONSOLIDATES: MRS GANDHI CONTINUES HER FIRM POSTURE TOWARD THE OPPOSITION AND PRESS DESPITE OCCASIONAL HINTS TO THE CONTRARY. THE GOI IS STILL ARRESTING OR INTIMIDATING OPPOSITION POLITICIANS, PARTICULARLY FORMER OUTSPOKEN CRITICS OF MRS GANDHI. THE PRESSURE HAS MOVED HUNDREDS OF OPPOSITION POLITICIANS TO RESIGN FROM THEIR PARTIES AND PUBLICLY TO PLEDGE SUPPORT TO THE 20 POINT PROGRAM. IF THE GOI LIBERALIZES POLITICAL AND PRESS RESTRICTIONS, AS MRS GANDHI HAS RECENTLY HINTED, CONFIDENTIAL

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THE CHANGES WILL PROBABLY STRESS FORM (E.G., A GOI CONTROLLED PRESS COUNCIL THAT WILL OVERSEE "SELF-CENSORSHIP) RATHER THAN SUBSTANCE. THE GOI'S FORMIDABLE INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY IS HUNTING AND HARASSING THE DIVIDED AND CONFUSED OPPOSITION ELEMENTS THAT HAVE GONE UNDERGROUND TO ESCAPE ARREST.

4. THE MONSOON SESSION OF PARLIAMENT ILLUSTRATED MRS GANDHI'S MASTERY OVER THE COUNTRY'S PARAMOUNT LEGISLATIVE BODY AND POLITICAL PARTY. CONGRESS POLITICIANS AT ALL LEVELS STOUTLY DEFEND THE EMERGENCY. IN THE LAW MINISTRY, LEGISLATION IS BEING FORMULATED THAT WILL GO BEYOND THE ANTI-COURT STRICTURES RECENTLY PASSED TO EXCULPATE MRS GANDHI. THE LEGISLATION WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY FURTHER CURTAIL THE JUDICIARY'S POWERS TO QUESTION PARLIAMENTARY LEGISLATION OR CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS, AND PERHAPS REDUCE IT TO THE CURRENTLY IMPOTENT LEVEL OF PARLIAMENT AND THE PRESS.

5. SINCE OUR LAST ANALYSIS, THE GOI HAS STEADILY CONTINUED TO EXTEND THE EMERGENCY'S PROVISIONS AGAINST RELUCTANT STATE ADMINISTRATIONS IN TAMIL NADU AND GUJARAT. CHIEF MINISTERS OF BOTH STATES HAVE

AFFIRMED THEIR ACCEPTANCE OF THE EMERGENCY AS A FACT  
OF LIFE. CENSORSHIP IS WELL ESTABLISHED. DELHI WILL  
PROBABLY ALLOW ONE OR BOTH OF THESE STATE OPPOSITION  
GOVERNMENTS TO CONTINUE AS "SHOWCASES" TO PROVE TO THE  
WORLD THAT DEMOCRACY IN INDIA IS ALIVE AND WELL,  
EVEN IF IT MEANS GRANTING A LIMITED DEGREE OF  
INDIVIDUALITY.

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P R 250130Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0852

INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

6. SOME PITFALLS: THE WEAL AND DIVIDED OPPOSITION ELEMENTS WHO  
HAVE ESCAPED ARREST AND GONE UNDER GROUND ARE A SOURCE OF CONCERN

FOR MRS. GANDHI. THESE CLANDESTINE GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

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POSE AN ALMOST NEGLIGIBLE PROBLEM NOW, BUT THEY COULD OVER TIME BECOME A THORN IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S SIDE. IN SUPPRESSING POLITICAL AND PRESS FREEDOMS, SHE HAS FORCED DISSENT AND OPPOSITION INTO ILLEGAL CHANNELS. OVER TIME, LEADERSHIP IN THE ESTABLISHED OPPOSITION COULD DRIFT FROM THE OLD GANDHIAN GENERATION, MOSTLY IN JAIL OR NOW "RECONCILED," TO MORE RADICAL ELEMENTS ON THE LEFT (THE NAXALITES) AND RIGHT (THE RSS). WHILE REGIONAL, POLITICAL AND OTHER DIFFERENCES AND CONSTANT PRESSURE FROM THE POLICE PROBABLY RULE OUT ANY SIGNIFICANT DEGREE OF COORDINATION OR EVEN COMMUNICATION UNDERGROUND, DETERMINED SMALL GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS COULD SUCCESSFULLY CARRY OUT ISOLATED ACTS OF SABOTAGE OR ASSASSINATION (GODSE, GANDHI'S ASSASSIN, WAS PART OF A VERY SMALL, ISOLATED CIRCLE OR PLOTTERS). THIS, IN TURN COULD PROGRESSIVELY ATTRACT PUBLIC ATTENTION AT HOME AND ABROAD, AND LEAD TO FURTHER REPRESSION BY MRS. GANDHI.

7. A SECOND DANGER IS THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HERSELF WILL INCREASINGLY BE ISOLATED FROM IDEAS AND ADVICE THAT ONCE FLOWED FREELY IN THE MEDIA, LEGISLATURES, AND THE CONGRESS PARTY, THOUGH SHE STILL SEES DOZENS OF VISITORS FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE DAILY. WITH THE WIDESPREAD USE OF EXTRAORDINARY POWERS, INDIVIDUALS REPRESENTING KEY SECTIONS OF THE POPULATION MAY BECOME LESS WILLING TO EXPRESS THEIR OPINIONS, OR THEY LIMIT THEIR VIEWS TO WHAT MRS. GANDHI WANTS TO HEAR. SECURITY CONCERNS AND A LIMITED NUMBER OF POLITICAL ADVISORS, CHOSEN ON THE BASIS OF LOYALTY OR FAMILIAL CONNECTIONS RATHER THAN MERIT COULD REINFORCE THIS ISOLATION. IN HER NEW AUTHORITARIAN CONTEXT, MRS. GANDHI WILL BE FACED WITH EVEN MORE DECISIONS TO MAKE PERSONALLY. BUT SHE HAS NO EFFECTIVE COORDINATING GROUP OR COMMITTEE WHICH CAN MONITOR THESE DECISIONS AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION. SHE APPARENTLY OFTEN APPROVES OR SNAPS DECISIONS WHICH THEN DISSIPATE INTO NTHONGNESS BY THE TIME THEY REACH THE BUREAUCRACY. HER INFORMAL APPROACH OFFERS NO ESTABLISHED MEANS OF EVEN REMEMBERING WHAT SHE HAS APPROVED.

8. PROSPECTS: MRS. GANDHI'S MOVE TO ACCELERATE HER SIX-YEAR LONG DRIFT TOWARD AUTHORITARIANISM TWO MONTHS AGO WAS BASED ON THE BIGGEST THREAT TO HER POSITION SINCE THE 1969 CONGRESS PARTY CRISIS. HER PATTERN OF REACTION--SKILLFUL AND RUTHLESS POLITICAL MANEUVERING WHILE ASPOUSING SOCIALIST SOCIO-ECONOMIC

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"PLATFORMS" AND RHETORIC-HAS BEEN STRIKINGLY SIMILAR' TO THE 1969 PATTERN. THEY THE OBSTACLE TO ECONOMIC PROGRESS AND POLITICAL STABILITY WAS THE CONGRESS PARTY OLD GUARD; IN 1976, IT IS THE CONSERVATIVE OPPOSITION, WHICH HAS SCORED IN GUJARAT, AND THE JUDICIARY. THE CURRENT PLATFORM HAS TWENTY INSTEAD OF

1969' TEN POINTS. THE MAJOR DIFFERENCE BETWEEN 1969 AND 1975 IS NOT THE PROCESS BUT THE RESULT. IN 1969 MRS. GANDHI SOUNDLY TROUNCED THE SYNDICATE AND BEGAN TO DE-ENERGIZE THE CONGRESS PARTY AND MAKE IT RESPONSIVE TO HER DIRECTION. SHE FOLLOWED WITH A PRO-LEFTIST TILT IN BOTH DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICIES. IN 1975, SHE HAS MADE BASIC ALTERATIONS IN THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION AND POST-INDEPENDENCE POLITICAL PROCESS. IN PRACTICE SHE APPEARS TO BE APPLYING ADDED WEIGHT TO THE 1974-75 EMPHASIS ON PRODUCTION IN ECONOMIC POLICIES. WHILE MAINTAINING A FORMALISTIC ALLIANCE WITH THE PRO-MOSCOW CPI, SHE APPEARS TO BE IGNORING ITS OVERTURES FOR CLOSER CO-OPERATION AND LOOKING TOWARD MORE CONSERVATIVE POLITICAL ADVISORS. BOTH HER OWN RECENT ACTIONS AND THE FOREIGN POLICY BUREAUCRACY IN SOUTH BLOCK SIGNAL A READINESS TO BETTER RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. THE CPI AND CONGRESS LEFT ARE DOING THEIR BEST TO BLOC THAT TREND.

9. NEVERTHELESS, IF THE PAST AND MRS. GANDHI'S PERSONAL STYLE ARE ANY GUIDES, REAL POLITICAL OR ECONOMIC SHIFTS DEVELOPING OUT OF THE EMERGENCY WILL TAKE ROOT SLOWLY. A DETERMINATION TO PRESERVE HER POLITICAL SUPREMACY AND A PENCHANT FOR LOOKING AT EVERY SITUATION THROUGH A POLITICAL PRISM EMPHASIZING CAUTION AND STABILITY RATHER THAN DISRUPTIVE CHANGE WILL DOMINATE MRS. GANDHI'S ACTIONS. SHE WILL ACCORDINGLY CONTINUE HER EFFORT TO ALTER THE CONSTITUTION TO PROTECT HER POSITION AND STRENGTHEN HER EXECUTIVE POWER. SHE MAY SLACKEN PRESS AND POLITICAL RESTRICTIONS BUT ONLY TO THE EXTENT THEY DO NOT INTERFERE WITH HER AUTHORITARIAN POWERS. HER POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DECISIONS, WILL TARGET SHORT RATHER THAN LONG-TERM GOALS. (POPULATION CONTROL, DID NOT FIND MENTION IN THE 20 POINT PROGRAM.) THEY VERY ENORMITY OF INDIAN PROBLEMS AND THE SHORTCOMINGS OF THE BUREAUCRATIC MACHINERY TO HANDLE THEM INDICATE THAT MRS. GANDHI MAY STILL BE FORCED TO SUBSTITUTE SYMBOLIC ACTIONS FOR REAL FORWARD MOVEMENT, PARTICULARLY IN RURAL AREAS. FOR EXAMPLE, NEAR CALCUTTA RECENTLY, THE 24 PARAGANAS DISTRICT MAGISTRATE TOLD A CLAUCTTA CONGEN VISITOR THAT HE HAS TARGETED THE COLLECTION

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OF 5000 ACRES AND 20,000 HOMSTITES TO DISTRIBUTE AMONG THE 12 MILLION PEOPLE IN HIS POVERTY-STRICKEN DISTRICT. NEVERTHELESS, THE EMERGENCY HAS INITIATED ACTIONS THAT CAN AND WILL SEE THE DISTRIBUTION OF HOME SITES AND PUBLIC LAND TO THOUSANDS OF PEASANTS IN EACH STATE. THERE ARE SEVERAL STATES IN WHICH THOUSANDS MORE ACRES OF LAND CAN BE TAKEN AWAY FROM A RELATIVELY FEW EXTREMELY RICH FARMERS WITHOUT JEOPARDIZING BASIC SUPPORT FROM THE WELL-TO-DO FARMERS. WORTH WATCHING ARE THE LOCAL " PUBLIC" COMMITTEES BEING SET UP TO WATCH OVER THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AGRICULTURAL REFORMS OR THE FOLLOW-UP TO PRESIDENT FAKRUDDIN ALI AHMED'S APPEAL ON REPUBLIC DAY FOR GREATER COOPERATION BETWEEN SMALL FARMERS AND FOR MORE ORGANIZED DEPLOYMENT OF RURAL MANPOWER TO REPAIR IRRIGATION WORKS, ROADS, AND RESERVOIRS.

10. AT THIS TIME, HOWEVER, WE THINK IT UNLIKELY THAT MRS. GANDHI INTENDS TO EMBARK ON THE TYPE OF SOCIAL ENGINEERING PURSUED IN THE COMMUNIST WORLD; OR THAT SHE WILL SEEK TO REVAMP THE BUREAUCRACY; OR THAT SHE WILL WIDEN HER CIRCLE OF ANTAGONISTS BY THREATENING THE BASIC INTERESTS OF THE POWERFUL FARM LOBBY IN CONGRESS OR THE INCOME OF ORGANIZED LABOR. INSTEAD, SHE IS MORE LIKELY TO CONTINUE TO WORK THROUGH THE ESTABLISHED BUREAUCRATIC AND POLITICAL MACHINERY SHE IS ACCUSTOMED TO, EMPHASIZING MORE EFFECTIVE USE OF INDIA'S ECONOMIC RESOURCES RATHER THAN SOCIETAL RESTRUCTURING OR OVER-AMBITIOUS REDISTRIBUTION PROGRAMS. THE INCREASED DISCIPLINE, ORDER AND INDUSTRIAL PEACE BROUGHT BY THE EMERGENCY, MAY INDEED RAISE PRODUCTION; BUT, AS WE STATED IN LAST WEEK'S ECONOMIC ANALYSIS, THESE MEASURES ALONE WILL NOT REVERSE THE LONG-TERM FUNDAMENTAL ECONOMIC PROBLEMS THAT WILL PLAGUE INDIA OVER THE DECADES AHEAD.

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**To:** STATE INFO COLOMBO  
DACCA  
ISLAMABAD  
KABUL  
KATHMANDU  
LONDON



MOSCOW  
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